



# Michigan Counseling Association

Michigan Counseling Association  
Licensure Committee

## Licensed Professional Counselor Quick Fact Sheet

### ***Licensed Professional Counselor Defined***

Master's or doctoral-level mental health clinician specially trained in the assessment, treatment, and prevention of behavioral, emotional and mental health issues and addiction

### **LPC Licensure Requirements**

- Hold a Master's degree or a doctorate from a Board-approved academic program
- Possess a Limited License as a Professional Counselor (LLPC) and complete a minimum of 3,000 post-graduate clinical hours under the supervision of a fully licensed counselor (LPC) in no less than 2 years
- Successfully pass the National Counselor Examination

### **Michigan Law & Public Health Recognition of Licensed Professional Counselors**

- Since 1988, Licensed Professional Counselors have been recognized in Michigan as mental health clinicians through the counselor licensure law
- The *Michigan Counselor Licensure Law* and the *Administrative Rules* are the primary sources of guidance to understanding the scope of practice of professional counselors in Michigan
- LPC's are *Qualified Mental Health Providers* as authorized by the Michigan Department of Community Health and for the purposes of services provided through Medicaid

### ***Scope of Practice - Brief***

*Licensed Professional Counselors'* scope of practice includes all of the following:

- Assessment, testing and evaluation
- Individual, family and group counseling and psychotherapy
- Diagnosis and treatment planning for mental and emotional disorders
- Prevention, behavior modification, and guidance to individuals, families, and organizations

### ***Section 333.18101 of the Counselor Licensure Law:***

Counseling principles, methods or procedures means a developmental approach that systematically assists an individual through the application of any of the following procedures: (i) Evaluation and appraisal techniques

(ii) Exploring alternative solutions

(iii) Developing and providing a counseling plan for mental and emotional development

(iv) Guidance

(v) Psychoeducational consulting

(vi) Learning theory

(vii) Individual and group techniques emphasizing prevention

(viii) Counseling techniques

(ix) Behavior modification techniques

### **Testing and Evaluation**

R 338.1751 of the Administrative Rules for Counseling defines preparation for testing and evaluation procedures that include:

*Group and individual psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal and diagnosis*

*Selecting, administering, scoring, and interpreting instruments that are designed to assess all of the following with respect to the individual:*

- *Aptitudes*
- *Attitudes*
- *Achievements*
- *Factors that influence appraisals*
- *Use of appraisal and diagnostic results in helping processes*
- *Interests*
- *Abilities*
- *Personal characteristics*

### **Qualification for Use of Testing & Assessment Instruments**

LPC's typically qualify at the highest level of test evaluators for purchasing and using testing instruments. According to Pearson Assessments (2009), one of the largest publishers of clinical tests, *Tests with a C qualification require a high level of expertise in test interpretation, and can be purchased by individuals with:*

- *Licensure or certification to practice in your state in a field related to the purchase OR*
- *A doctorate degree in psychology, education, or closely related field with formal training in the ethical administration, scoring, and interpretation of clinical assessments related to the intended use of the assessment*
- Qualification levels are established by the publishing companies that hold the rights to testing instruments
- The National Fair Access Coalition on Testing (FACT) exists to protect fair access to testing by professionals with proper training and to stipulate a model Code of Ethics for testing practices

### **Diagnosis**

R 338.1751, Rule 1 (f) of the Administrative Rules for Counseling defines counseling techniques and states: *Counseling techniques means the application of basic counseling and psychotherapy skills and theories in the counseling process in order to do all of the following:*

- (i) *Establish and maintain the counseling relationship*
- (ii) *Diagnose and identify the problem*
- (iii) *Formulate a preventive, treatment or rehabilitative plan*
- (iv) *Facilitate appropriate interventions*

### **Psychotherapy vs. Counseling**

The term *psychotherapy* does not refer to any particular mental health profession, and within the counseling literature, the terms counseling and psychotherapy are used interchangeably to refer to the therapeutic process, with no differentiation of the terms. As such, the scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors includes both *counseling and psychotherapy*.

Insurance companies typically use the term psychotherapy for reimbursement of services provided by mental health clinicians.

### **Academic Preparation of Licensed Professional Counselors**

In accordance with CACREP (national accrediting body), academic preparation of Licensed Professional Counselors includes the following 8 core areas:

- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Professional Orientation & Ethical Practice | Social & Cultural Diversity   |
| Human Growth & Development                  | Career Development            |
| Helping Relationships                       | Group Work                    |
| Assessment                                  | Research & Program Evaluation |

In addition, counselors must complete a minimum of 700 supervised clinical practice hours that includes assessment, individual and group counseling.

### **Access to LPC's in Michigan**

- In 2009, there were 5,013 LPC's/LLPC's in Michigan (MI Board of Health Professions)
- In 2009, there were academic programs at 13 Michigan universities preparing professional counselors



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## **Qualified Mental Health Professionals in Juvenile Justice Michigan Counseling Association House Families, Children, and Seniors Committee**

Chairman Kurtz and Members of the Michigan House Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors:

It is important to provide guidance to jurists in determining a juvenile's competence to stand trial and to restore a juvenile to competence (if possible) so that he or she may proceed with a trial. Much work has gone into the legislation before the committee today to create a system that provides for highly effective and standardized competency evaluations and that recognizes judicial discretion. The end result is a system that is more just for children and better for law enforcement and defense attorneys.

The Michigan Counseling Association has reviewed the bills before the committee, and though there are some concerns, the MCA supports SB 246 and 247. The legislation before the committee today provides sufficient guidance and reflects responsiveness to current issues in the juvenile justice system. The bills do this by:

- Establishing specific guidelines about types of assessment areas and sources of information needed for comprehensive forensic evaluation. Because the language reflects areas needed to be assessed (i.e., cognitive development, mental status) rather than identifying specific types of assessment instruments, it is fluid enough to change as new testing instruments are developed and research about specific instruments continues to grow.
- Establishing credentialing guidelines for evaluators that clearly articulate qualifications (qualified mental health professionals, specialized training). This is consistent with national standards that emphasize specific training and experience in this area.
- Through the creation of this legislation, access to fitness evaluations for youthful offenders is significantly expanded and options available to jurists in locating and identifying qualified evaluators are significantly increased. Both of these issues contribute to a more responsive juvenile justice system that puts the best interest of youth, families, and the community first.
- Recognizing that it is not academic degree that constitutes qualifications of forensic mental health professionals but rather a combination of specific training, experience, and academic degree that constitutes such. By doing so, this legislation recognizes that no specific advanced mental health degree (counseling, psychiatry, psychology) requires specific coursework in

forensic evaluation and as such, no one discipline has an advantage over another with regard to this type of evaluation. Further, by fully recognizing this is consistent with national standards as well as with related Michigan legislation that is based upon broad and inclusive definitions of qualified mental health professionals (i.e., Master's degree or doctorate in counseling, clinical psychology, psychiatry).

- Expanding the pool of qualified evaluators by establishing evaluator qualifications that emphasize training and experience rather than a specific degree guards Michigan against potential civil rights issues that may evolve due to restricting forensic evaluation to a small, homogeneous group of professionals. Because the juvenile justice system nationally, and in Michigan, specifically, continues to be challenged by disproportionate racial minority representation, ensuring a broad and heterogeneous group of professional evaluators may mitigate or act against this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment today, and the Michigan Counseling Association looks forward to continuing work on this subject.